1875—CITY DOCUMENT No. 7.

TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

TRUSTEES

OF THE

FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

OF

NEW BEDFORD.

NEW BEDFORD:
FESSENDEN & BAKER, PRINTERS TO THE CITY.
1875.

OFFICERS OF THE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

FOR THE YEAR 1875.

TRUSTEES.

EX OFFICIO. TERMS EXPIRE JANUARY, 1876.

ABRAHAM H. HOWLAND, Jr., Mayor of the City.
EDWIN DEWS, President of the Common Council.
JOHN B. BAYLIES, Chairman of the Committee of the City Council on Public Instruction.

ELECTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL.

WARREN LADD,	Term expires Jan. 1876.
B. F. H. REED,	Term expires Jan. 1876.
S. GRIFFITTS MORGAN,	Term expires Jan. 1877.
THOMAS H. KNOWLES,	Term expires Jan. 1877.
GEORGE HOWLAND, Jr.,	Term expires Jan. 1878.
GEORGE H. DUNBAR,	Term expires Jan. 1878.

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD.

THE MAYOR.

CLERK.

B. F. H. REED.

COMMITTEES.

ON THE LIBRARY—The Mayor, Messrs. Ladd, Howland, Morgan, and Dunbar.
ON THE BUILDING—Messrs. Baylies, and Dews.
ON BINDING AND BLANKS—Messrs. Knowles, and Morgan.
ON THE MUSEUM—Messrs. Morgan, Reed, and Dunbar.

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LIBRARY.

GEORGE H. DUNBAR.

LIBRARIAN.

ROBERT C. INGRAHAM.

ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS.

JOSEPHINE A. MERRICK, MARY E. BROWN.

DONATIONS FOR THE YEAR 1874.

DONORS.	Volumes. Bound.	Volumes. Unbound.	Pamphlets.
American Antiquarian Society,		2	
American Philosophical Society,		1	
Bell, W. S.,			1
Boston Public Library,			6
Bradlee, C. D.,			1
Brock, Jethro C.,	1		1
Brookline Public Library,	1		1
Buckminster, Joseph,		4	
Buffinton, James,	1		2
Bureau of Education, Washington,			1
Butler, B. F.,			1
Butler, James D.,	33		
Butler Hospital for the Insane,			1
Chandler, Charles F.,			1
Chapman, Cyrus W.,	1		
Charlestown Public Library,			1
Chicago Public Library,			1
Chisholm, E. H.,	26		11
Clarke, Henry B.,		1	
Cobden Club,			5
Commissioner of Industrial Resources, Alabama,			1
Congdon, Charles T.,			1
Congdon, James B.,	1		2
Cutter, Abram E.,			6
Decanver, H. C.,		1	
Dexter, Franklin B.,		1	2
Edwards, Henry,	1		
Farrington, William H.,			19
Guthrie, W. E.,		1	1
Hall, Mrs. I. D.,	21	27	22
Hartford Young Men's Institute,			1
Harvard College,			1
Hawes, John A.,	1		

DONORS.	Volumes. Bound.	Volumes. Unbound.	Pamphlets.
Hawkins, Dexter A.,			1
Holton Public Library,			1
Howland, George, Jr.,	2	6	224
Howson, H.,			10
Hoyt, David W.,			1
Hutchinson, S.,	1		2
Indianapolis Public Library,	1		
Ladd, Warren,	4		
Lancaster Library,			1
Lawrence Public Library,	1		8
Lee, J. W. M.,		1	
Library Company, Philadelphia,			2
Lindsey, Benjamin,	4		
Lindsley, J. B.,			1
McAlpine, William J.,			1
Mercantile Library Association, Baltimore,			1
Mercantile Library Association, Brooklyn,			1
Mercantile Library Association, New York,		1	
Mercantile Library Association, San Francisco,			3
Merriam, C. L.,			1
Mitchell, C. L.,			2
Montague, W. L.,			1
Morgan, S. G.,			1
New Bedford Monthly Meeting of Friends,			1
Newton Free Library,			2
New York State Library,			1
North Church, Salem,	1		
Nye, Gideon, Jr.,			3
Peabody Institute, Baltimore,			1
Peabody Institute, Danvers,			1
Pennsylvania Railroad Company,			1
Pitman, Robert C.,			55
Potter, William J.,			2
Quincy, Josiah P.,			1
Quincy Public Library,			1
Redwood Library,			1
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute,			1
Ricketson, Mrs. Phebe P.,	2		
Roberts, O. A.,	1		
Rodman, Benjamin,	2		1
Rodman, Edmund,			1

DONORS.	Volumes. Bound.	Volumes. Unbound.	Pamphlets.
Russell, Wm. A.,		15	
Scribner, Welford & Armstrong,		1	
Smithsonian Institution,	1	2	
Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, N. Y.,			1
Springfield City Library Association,			3
Staples, S. E.,			2
State Lunatic Hospital, Northampton,			1
State of Massachusetts,	8		
Terry, Herbert,			1
Thompson, C. O.,			1
Thomson, John H.,		4	13
Trustees of Memorial Hall, Andover,	1		2
United States: Coast Survey,	1		
Department of the Interior,	115		
Engineer Department,	1	1	3
War Department,			1
Treasury Department,	1		
Warren County Library, Monmouth, Ill.,			1
Watertown Public Library,			1
Willey, Henry,	2		4
Wilmington Institute,			1
Winchester, C. T.,			2
Winchester Town Library,			1
Wood, Jabez,			12
Worcester Free Public Library,			1
Worth, Benjamin,			2
Young Men's Christian Association, Worcester,			1
Young Men's Natural History Society, New Bedford,	2		

NEWSPAPERS AND PRINTS.

Estate of J. F. Kelley.—Camp Meeting Herald, Vol. II, Nos. 1, 4; Vol. III, No. 6; Vol. IV, complete; Vol. V, Nos. 2–4; Vol. VI, complete. 1864–71.

Nye, Gideon, Jr.—Bulletin Mensuel de la Societe d'Acclimatation, 1874. 12 numbers.

Parsons, I. F.—Two Lithographs of the Lots belonging to the Nonquitt Beach and Wharf Association.

Publishers of the Index.—The Index, Vols. 1-4, 1870-73. 4 v. fo.

Purington, Mrs. S. H.—Print, "Tomb of Washington." Bost. 1801. T. Clarke, Sculp.

Reed, B. F. H.—The Benevolent Citizens, Vol. 1, No. 1, Oct. 27, 1874.

— The Seaside Gazette, 1872-73.

Smiley, A. K.—Photograph of Friends' School, Providence.

Wilcox, Thomas.—Commercial and Financial Chronicle, Vols. 1-4. N. Y. 1865-67. 4 v. 4°.

— Internal Revenue Record. New York, 1865-71. 7 v. 4°.

Wood, Jabez.—Boston Gazette, June 30 and July 28, 1777.

— Continental Journal and Weekly Advertiser. Boston, 1777, Dec. 4, 19; 1778, Jan. 1, 15; 1779, April 1.

— Muster Rolls of Capt. Luther Wilson's Company, 1803.

REPORT.

To the City Council of the City of New Bedford:

GENTLEMEN,—The Trustees of the Free Public Library respectfully present to you this, the TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT of that institution.

In entering upon the performance of this duty our thoughts immediately and naturally turn to our late associate, James B. Congdon, Esq., whose facile pen and willing heart has performed this service for the Board for the last *thirteen consecutive years*, and, with only *four exceptions, has prepared every Report since the establishment of the Library.*

Mr. Congdon's connection with the Trustees dates from the first; and, with the exception of the years 1858, 1859 and 1860, has been uninterrupted until his resignation, which was communicated to the present Board on the 1st of August last. Such a term, prolonged for most of the time by annual elections, is as honorable to him as it has been useful to the institution he has so devotedly cherished.

In the appendix (A) will be found his letter informing the Board of his resignation, and the action of his associates thereon.

Robert C. Pitman was elected, in the manner provided by the ordinance, to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

THE LIBRARY.

Our Librarian furnishes the usual statistics as follows:

The number of volumes taken from the Library during

the year has been *forty-six thousand six hundred and forty.*

This gives a daily average of *one hundred and fifty-one.*

The cards now issued number *thirteen thousand and three hundred.*

The increase in the number of cards issued for the year is *eight hundred and fifty-seven.*

The number of volumes now belonging to the Library is estimated at *thirty-two thousand.*

These items are encouraging. They show a gain of four thousand eight hundred and twenty-four in the aggregate of books delivered, of sixteen in the daily average, and of two thousand volumes in the size of the Library over the year 1873.

But it is also to be borne in mind, as stated in last year's Report, that "the statistics of circulation show but imperfectly the extent to which our large and valuable collection of books has been diffusing knowledge and affording attractive and healthful recreation. The number of readers at our tables, attracted by the long list of periodicals, American and foreign, which they find there, and by the facilities afforded them for reading and consulting the books of the Library, all of which are at their service for this purpose, continues to increase."

Accompanying this Report we give a table (Appendix B) showing the gradual growth of our institution from its establishment. While our population cannot be estimated to have increased above 20 per cent. in that time, the circulation of our books has more than doubled and we have multiplied our volumes more than five fold.

We are aware that these may be deemed superficial statistics, and we hope to see the time when a detailed report each year of the Librarian shall contribute something to a study of those important problems which are deeper than numerical ones. We know how many books are used; we

should be glad to know what books are used and by whom. It would be especially cheering if we could know that we were every year penetrating with the quickening influence of our books a little lower in our social strata, and at the same time elevating still higher the tastes of our readers. So far as statistics of other public libraries have fallen under our observation, it is remarkable how coincident are the results as to the quality of the reading. Thus the Boston report of 1873 gives 74 as the percentage of fiction and juveniles; Lawrence gives 75 as the percentage of the same class, and Cincinnati, Ohio, furnishes as the exact percentage, 73.8, and the competent expert who is the librarian of the latter city, adds: "About three fourths of the selections will be prose fiction and juveniles. If a library should report a much lower ratio than this, the necessary inference would be that the library was not well furnished in this department, that there was some restriction on the use of these books, or that the statistics were not accurately kept." The able librarian who has care of the Lawrence Free Public Library, has made much study of this matter of what we may call the "qualitative analysis" of library circulation. In his last report he classifies the total circulation thus: sensational fiction, 10; wholesome fiction, 40; juveniles, mostly fiction, 25; solid reading, 25.

We should be inclined to think the above a too favorable estimate of the ordinary proportion between the wholesome and the sensational in fiction; and on the other hand we should be inclined to allow an appreciable proportion of history, biography and travels among the "juveniles": but accepting the general result we have at least a circulation, three quarters of which may be deemed positively useful; for the "*wholesome*" modern novel can hardly have a lower place assigned it in the literature of the century than belongs to the essays of the Spectator and its school of writers in the literature of the

last; while the graver works of this class sometimes not only exhibit high art but stimulate thought upon the deepest problems of social and individual life.

We hope future statistics of our library may enable us to watch the effect of the gradual transformation of our community from a maritime to a manufacturing city. It is a curious fact that while we are having satisfaction in the increase of our circulation, we are still so far behind some of our sister cities. Thus, against our circulation of 46,640, stands the circulation of Charlestown (population 28,323) in 1871 at 63,683, and Lawrence (population 28,921) in 1873 at 128,463.

LIBRARIAN.

We continue to enjoy the services of the same faithful librarian who has been with us from the start; and it has been a source of satisfaction to us that we have been able during the year to give him another assistant. We cannot say that in so doing we have lightened his labors; for the instinct of work in such a man, gives him no rest; but in relieving him in part from the routine of ordinary service, we have secured a larger part of his time for more valuable uses. Every one who has ever had occasion to use our library for purposes of reference, must have a grateful appreciation of Mr. Ingraham's varied knowledge and of his unvarying courtesy.

CATALOGUE.

The necessity of a catalogue of the large accessions to our library since 1869, has been alluded to in prior Reports. The Trustees have felt that the work could no longer be properly delayed, and on the 23d of March last they ordered the compilation by the librarian of a catalogue of such accessions up to January 1st, 1874. The librarian has devoted an amount of pains-taking labor to this work, which will never be fully appreciated except by those engaged in

similar undertakings. The manuscript has been completed and the earlier sheets are passing through the press, but the printing and proof-reading proceeds so slowly that it will be months yet before the work is completed. When the time comes for payment of the expense, a special appropriation will be needed therefor. Much consideration has been given during the year to plans for wider and earlier dissemination of information as to additions to our library. The Trustees in March voted that quarterly bulletins of accessions be published; and accordingly three have been issued, bringing the list down to the 1st of October. Somewhat later it was voted that such publications be made weekly in both the daily papers. This has not been found entirely practicable, and the whole subject will probably present itself for the renewed consideration of the incoming board.

ACCESSIONS.

As will be seen by the financial statement in this Report, the Trustees have not been limited in their accessions by any lack of funds. They have added all the issues of current literature for which there seemed likely to be any call, and beyond these have added as many standard works as they have had opportunity to buy judiciously, or the librarian to arrange. When the work of the catalogue is completed, the attention of the librarian will be more devoted to the aid of the Trustees in this department of work. At present, the purchased accessions are very considerably in advance of the additions to the shelves of the library and of the advertisement thereof, as the latter is not made till the books are ready for delivery.

Among the recent valuable additions to the library, may be noticed here an entire set of the Reports of the Supreme Court of the United States, Phillmore's International Law, Twiss' Law of Nations and May's Parliamentary Law. We

have also made a beginning in German literature with the complete works of Goethe and Schiller in the original. An entire set of the Greek and Latin classics in the original will be added, as soon as the selection from various editions is made. We would add that we are always glad to receive suggestions as to the purchase of any book not upon our shelves, and such may be made to the librarian.

READING ROOM.

The subject of a Free Public Reading Room was brought to the attention of the City Council in the Inaugural Address of the Mayor, the President of this Board, at the opening of the present year. The project met with their cordial support, and on March 4th they adopted a report which recommended "the establishment of such a Reading Room upon some one of our public avenues in the city, the expense to be taken from the Sylvia Ann Howland Fund; and referring the whole matter to the Trustees of the Free Public Library, requesting that they may carry into effect the above recommendation at the earliest possible moment." The matter was taken into immediate consideration by the Trustees and was the subject of discussion at several meetings. The general judgment of the Board was adverse to the establishment upon the plan proposed, but no definite action was taken until on the 5th of September a vote was passed requesting the opinion of the City Solicitor as to the legality of the payment from the Sylvia Ann Howland Fund. On the 3d of October his opinion was laid before the Trustees, in which he says: "Miss Howland's purpose was, so far as we can infer from the will, which is the only legal means of interpreting her purpose, not to relieve the tax-payers of the city from the outlay for maintaining a library building with its running expense, but to co-operate directly in enlarging the library itself. It would not be legal to divert any of the

principal or income to the establishing or maintaining a Free Public Reading Room upon some one of our public avenues."

Meantime, in anticipation of this opinion, the Board on the 3d of October, "Resolved, that it is expedient to open a Reading Room, to be supplied with the newspapers and periodicals of the day in connection with the Free Public Library, without unnecessary delay, and to this end the Mayor, as President of this Board, be requested on behalf of the Trustees, to ask the City Council to provide as soon as practicable, the necessary room therefor in the library building." The majority of the Trustees were of the opinion that for weighty reasons the proposed Reading Room should not only be connected with, but under the same roof as the library itself. In this manner it was believed that the current expense would be greatly lessened, that decorum would be better preserved, and above all, that the Reading Room would prove a feeder to the library proper. A variety of opinions still existed as to the practical plan, whether the Reading Room should occupy space upon the first floor now devoted to city offices, whether additions or internal architectural changes should be made, or whether it should be placed in the present library room. But these were questions which the Trustees had no power to settle; and they remitted the matter to the City Council for decision. As soon as it was determined by the Council to fit up the present room, the Board proceeded to act in concurrence, and they have now the pleasure to report that the public can find such newspapers as the limited accommodations will allow upon the files. It will be observed that the City Solicitor's opinion does not decide whether the acquisition of newspapers can be deemed a lawful use of the bequest of Miss Howland for the enlargement of the Free Public Library. Some diversity of opinion has been expressed upon this matter, but the Trustees were of opinion that whatever the law might allow, it was at least

unwise to divert any portion of the fund, however small, from its most obvious and natural use. The expense is accordingly to be met from the annual appropriation.

We have no doubt from the experience of several of our sister cities that this new feature of our library room will prove an attractive and popular one. If so, the accommodation now furnished will, at an early day, be found insufficient for visitors and for the display of the desired variety of papers.

Other considerations will soon press upon the City Government with still greater force the necessity of more ample space. No proper system of classification of books will allow of their being placed in continuous rows in the order of accession, and even if they were so placed, the additions from the Howland Fund would, in a few years, fill all the shelves that are or can be placed in our room. Of course, the necessity of enlargement would be obviated if the whole library building were devoted to library purposes. Perhaps a beginning might at least be made by a transfer of a part of the city offices now occupying the first floor to the building adjacent to the library, purchased by the city during the past year. If space could thus be made for a reading room, embracing not only newspapers but the large list of periodicals now taken, and for a room which should embrace the department of fiction and juveniles, the upper room would then be adequate to the needs of the rest of the library for many years. We may add that unless the physical exercise of stair-climbing be considered healthful, there would be by this arrangement a great gain to the patrons of the library.

HOWLAND FUND.

Some allusion has been made in this Report to the opinion of the City Solicitor in relation to use of the Sylvia Ann Howland Fund. The opinion was sought only upon the

single point indicated, but the Solicitor was led to give his attention to the status of the Fund and the relation of the city thereto, and he felt it his duty to call attention to serious difficulties in the continuance of the present management by the city. As the opinion related to matters over which the City Council had assumed control, the opinion was transmitted to them. It concerns the honor of the city that the trust should be administered with scrupulous care, that the best pecuniary investments are made that entire safety allows, and that the city derives no advantage therefrom. In this connection it may be well to inquire whether the library shall not be allowed interest upon the large balance standing to its credit from the unexpended income of this fund in the City Treasury. So far as the income has been expended by the Trustees they have always confined themselves to the strictest interpretation of the testator's bounty. The money has been spent for books and periodicals alone. Whatever change in the administration of this trust the courts may make, so far as the Public Library is concerned, it must necessarily be merely a change in form and in no respect as to expenditure.

We present, as required by the city ordinance, in the appendix hereto, a detailed statement of our expenditures and of the present state of this and our other Trust Funds. (Appendix C.)

DONATIONS.

Accompanying this is our list of donations for the year, showing 324 volumes and 479 pamphlets. Independent of the value of these gifts, they are gratefully received as evidences of thoughtful interest in our institution which is one of the guarantees of its continued success. Contributions of such pamphlets and manuscripts of local interest as are not accessible to buyers in the market, are received with espec-

ial gratitude. Those who have had no occasion to consider the subject, will be surprised to learn how ephemeral is the life of an ordinary pamphlet. As an illustration of this, the Trustees have already been obliged to furnish an imperfect set of these reports to other institutions, because no additional copies of the Second Annual Report were obtainable. Our supply of some other of the earlier reports is nearly exhausted.

THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

This collection was gathered by the Young Men's Natural History Society of New Bedford, a corporation which was organized in 1863, then by the name of the Young Men's Cabinet of Natural History. As the collection grew on the hands of the young men, the expense of its care and maintenance increased. At length they were forced to the conclusion, that without the aid of the city, they must sell it. It was inspected by parties who desired to purchase it, and could have been disposed of for about four thousand dollars. But they preferred that it should remain in New Bedford, and with a public spirit worthy of the warmest commendation proposed to make it a donation to the city. The proposition was referred by the City Council to the Trustees of the Free Public Library, and resulted in the collection being placed in charge of the Trustees, the Natural History Society agreeing to perform the duties of managing and enlarging it as theretofore. The details of this transaction were reported to the City Council in the 20th annual report of the Trustees, for the year 1871. The museum continued to be kept in Cummings Hall, and the cost to the city was something less than $400 a year.

But as the pecuniary burden rolled off from the young men's shoulders, their interest began to flag. During the last year the museum suffered somewhat from neglect, and at

length, on the 24th of March, 1874, the Society voted to dissolve, to take effect on the 5th of June.

This left the museum with no one to care for it; and with many articles of a perishable nature and requiring constant attention, it was in a way rapidly to relapse into a worthless and repulsive condition; while the city was saddled with an annual rent of $300, balanced by no advantage.

In this condition of affairs, a proposition was informally made by a member of this Board to the Marion Natural History Society, that the Society should take charge of the museum and remove it to Marion.

The Marion Society was glad to accept the proposal, if the Trustees would guarantee five years' possession, which would reimburse the Society for the expense of the removal. We were unwilling to grant such a condition, and the negotiations were made acceptable to the Marion Society in another way, with the concurrence of the Committee of the City Council on Public Property, and on the 26th of September the Society was notified that it could take possession. The transporting of the museum to Marion was soon commenced, and was completed on the 24th of October. A few heavy and bulky articles were left, and are now in the library building.

The lease of the museum to the Marion Natural History Society is copied in the appendix (D.)

The time may come when the city will resolve to maintain the museum where it will be accessible to the New Bedford public. The cost would probably not exceed $1,000 a year. But this would include no provision for its enlargement. Possibly some public spirited citizen may make a gift or bequest therefor. There may sometime be interest enough in Natural History among the teachers and pupils of the High School to warrant the placing of the museum in their charge. It could probably be displayed to advantage in the

assembly hall of the new High School house now to be built.

Under the present circumstances we are of the opinion that its location cannot be bettered. It is as near the city as it can be with proper care. The Marion Natural History Society is active, has a large membership, and has commodious rooms in an elegant building, erected and presented for the purpose by Mrs. Elizabeth Taber, of this city. The town of Marion views the institution with pride, and in the summer season the rooms of the Society are a resort for many people of culture from abroad.

With this review of the work of the year, we bring this Report to a close. Our library, commenced as a pioneer experiment, has long since become an assured success; its general plan now needs neither explanation nor eulogy. It has become one of the cherished institutions of our people. By the provisions of the ordinance establishing it, formed by one of the present Trustees and substantially unchanged since, the City Government for the time being, are secured an influential representation upon its board of control, and it has never lacked the full sympathy and support of the municipal authorities. But it must ever depend largely upon the care of the elective members of the Board of Trustees, unburdened with other civic duties, for its best success. Here as elsewhere in public station, no post is one of honor unless crowned with faithful public service.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

GEO. B. RICHMOND,
Mayor and President Board of Trustees.

B. F. H. Reed, Clerk.

January 2d, 1875.

APPENDIX.

A.

RESIGNATION OF JAMES B. CONGDON.

On resigning the office of a Trustee of the Free Public Library, Mr. Congdon addressed the following communication to his associates:

To the Trustees of the Free Public Library:

MY ESTEEMED FRIENDS,

Having in a note to the City Council of this date, resigned my office as a member of your Board, I should do violence to my own feelings and deem myself wanting in a proper respect for you did I allow the tie that has so long bound me to you and our cherished institution to be severed without the expression of my regard for you and of the deep regret that I feel in taking my leave of you and of the Free Public Library of New Bedford.

For a large part of my adult life, now a protracted one, I have been connected with the library, and have devoted to its growth and welfare a large part of my time and the best of my humble ability. From a feeble institution, holding its small catalogue of books in a hired room, it has, under the fostering care of the City Council, the donations of devoted friends, and the enlightened and persistent labors of its immediate directors and guardians, become a collection of books, the pride of our city, the source of intellectual enlightenment and rational recreation to our people, and the resort of scientific and scholarly visitors from our own and the neighboring inhabitants.

In taking my leave of you in my official capacity, I wish to express to you the sentiments of personal regard which I hold towards you, and my deep regret that our connection has ceased.

As memory shall bring back the scenes of the past, I shall always remember with peculiar pleasure and satisfaction the seasons when we have held pleasant intercourse at our stated meetings and labored together for the welfare of our cherished institution.

With the highest regard.

JAMES B. CONGDON.

New Bedford, 6 mo. 5, 1874.

At the meeting of the Trustees on the 1st of August, the above was ordered on record, and Mayor Richmond and Mr. Howland were appointed to draw up resolutions with regard thereto.

Jan. 2d, 1875, the committee reported the following, which was adopted and ordered to be printed in appendix to Report:

The committee, to whom was referred the communication of James B. Congdon, informing us that he had sent to the City Council a resignation of his office as a member of this Board, would recommend that the following preamble and resolutions be adopted and entered upon our records:

Whereas, our friend James B. Congdon has asked and obtained from the City Council, a release from the office of Trustee of the Free Public Library, a position which with a brief interval he has held from the establishment of the institution; and

Whereas, a devotedness, so long continued and so well directed, claims from this Board a just recognition, and such recognition a place upon our records: therefore,

Resolved, That while we regret the retirement of our late associate from a position in which he has been enabled to labor so long and so efficiently in behalf of the New Bedford Free Public Library, we feel it to be our duty to make a record of our conviction that he has faithfully filled up, in this respect, the measure of his obligations as a citizen of New Bedford and a friend to the city's material, intellectual and moral prosperity.

Resolved, That to this expression of our feelings as to the past, we would join a declaration of a friendly solicitude for his future welfare, and would convey to him our hopes and wishes for the peace and happiness of his declining years.

The following, also reported by the same committee, was adopted and ordered printed in appendix:

Whereas, our late associate James B. Congdon has expressed an intention to devote such intervals of leisure as may be allowed him, to the examination and preservation of the municipal records of the old Town of Dartmouth, and to the collection and arrangement of such materials for its history as may be found within his reach: therefore,

Voted, That the President and other officers of the library be requested to extend to Mr. Congdon such facilities as may be in their power in the prosecution of labors so important, and a work so fully in harmony with the design and operations of this institution.

B.

STATISTICS OF GROWTH.

Years.	Vols. Delivered.	Daily Average.	Cards Issued.	Increase for Year.	Total Vols. in Library.
*1853					6,000
1854	21,041		3,183		8,000
1855	23,240		3,937	754	9,000
1856	23,160		4,662	725	10,000
†1857					
1858	24,218	73	2,700		12,000
1859	25,224	82	3,415	715	13,500
1860	27,356	89	4,079	664	15,000
1861	30,673	100	4,692	613	15,500
1862	34,891	116	5,177	544	16,000
1863	37,261	119	5,701	524	17,000
1864	35,412	115	6,267	513	18,000
1865	35,035	125	7,144	543	20,000
1866	35,405	112	7,682	494	
1867	34,860	114	8,219	549	21,000
1868	34,563	112	8,821	528	
1869	35,702	116	9,608	787	22,000
1870	39,428	128	10,127	519	23,000
1871	40,270	130	10,620	496	26,000
1872	40,538	132	11,537	879	27,000
1873	41,816	135	12,443	974	30,000
1874	46,640	151	13,300	857	32,000

*Opened March 3, 1853.

†Closed six months for removal.

C.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The account of the expenses of the Library for the past year, from the ordinary funds of the City Treasury, is as follows:

1874.			
Jan. 3.	Balance to credit of Library,		$232.69
26.	One half net receipts from dog licenses,		769.23
April 9.	Annual appropriation,		2,500.00
Nov. 6.	Return premium on cancelled insurance policy,		8.30
Nov. and Dec.	Sundry receipts from rent of Cummings Hall,		54.00
			$3,564.22
Bills approved.	Feb. 14, 1874.	$232.69	
	March 23.	45.45	
	April 4.	663.00	
	May 2.	21.70	
	Aug. 1.	775.39	
	Oct. 3.	789.62	
	Nov. 7.	82.25	
	Jan. 2, 1875.	752.02	3,362.12
	Present balance to credit of Library,		$202.10

The above expenditures in detail are as follows:

Books and Periodicals:			
	William H. Piper & Co.,	$130.63	
	Scribner, Welford & Armstrong,	20.75	
	J. L. Sisson,	32.00	
	George W. Tryon, Jr.,	5.00	
	John C. Allen,	41.10	
	S. H. White,	3.21	
	H. J. Nowland,	6.00	
	E. Anthony & Sons,	6.00	$244.69
Binding,			8.00
Salaries of Librarian and Assistants,			2,380.00

Museum of Natural History:		
Rent of hall,	$300.00	
Insurance,	37.50	
Gas,	7.20	
Carting,	8.15	
Janitor,	13.00	365.85
Printing and Advertising:		
Extra copies 22d Annual Report,	$28.50	
Sundry jobs of cards, letter heads, &c.,	19.75	
Three numbers of quarterly bulletin,	117.50	
Extra copies catalogue of Fiction and Juveniles, 1869–74,	115.00	
Advertising books recently added, (9 months,)	54.23	334.98
Blank-book,		19.00
Stationery,		3.75
Postage,		1.00
Incidentals,		4.85
		$3,362.12

A summary of the Librarian's account is as follows:

1874. Jan. 1. Cash on hand,		$32.14
Receipts from sales of catalogues and bulletins,		15.84
Fines, &c.,		188.47
		$236.45
Paid for books, periodicals, and pamphlets,	$89.35	
Binding,	4.50	
Postage and post-office box rent,	33.73	
Expressage and freight,	30.84	
Covering paper,	13.13	
Stationery,	12.53	
Collecting books,	2.00	
Jobber,	1.47	
Incidentals,	5.58	193.13
1875. Jan. 1. Cash on hand,		$43.32

The Librarian's payments for books &c. have been as follows:

S. Cooper,	$1.00
Edwin Dews,	3.60

John H. Jones,	10.00
J. Baylies,	.50
Benerman & Wilson,	1.00
H. J. Nowland,	17.00
Sampson, Davenport & Co.,	1.00
F. Leypoldt,	1.00
Sophie W. Kent,	1.50
Butler & Fleetwood,	12.00
William Davenport,	5.50
American Social Science Association,	5.00
Beach, Son & Co.,	2.00
American Baptist Publication Society,	2.50
H. O. Houghton & Co.,	1.50
J. B. Newcomb,	4.25
U. S. Patent Office,	20.00
	$89.35

TRUST ACCOUNTS.

SYLVIA ANN HOWLAND FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY FUND.

1874. Jan. 3. Unexpended balance of income,			$9,415.41
July 1. Six months' interest,			1,500.00
Nov. 7. Transferred from Horticultural Society fund,			.43
1875. Jan. 1. Six months' interest,			1,500.00
			$12,415.84
Bills approved:	* Jan. 3, 1874.	$128.80	
	Feb. 14.	123.04	
	March 23.	327.76	
	April 4.	68.35	
	May 2.	161.62	
	Aug. 1.	288.98	
	Sept. 5.	166.81	
	Oct. 3.	65.51	
	Nov. 7.	481.95	
	Dec. 5.	498.67	
	Jan. 2, 1875.	311.28	2,622.77
Balance unexpended,			$9,793.07

* This date was the last meeting of the Board of Trustees for the year 1873, but the bills then approved were not considered in making the annual report for that year.

The detailed statement of expenditure from this fund, all of which has been for books and periodicals, is as follows:

John C. Allen,	$351.62
Chase & Town,	3.00
Silliman & Dana,	6.00
H. H. Mallory & Co.,	2.00
H. O. Houghton & Co.,	10.20
James R. Osgood & Co.,	6.00
Warren F. Draper,	7.00
Catholic Publication Society,	8.00
William B. Dana & Co.,	16.00
Christopher Cushing,	4.00
Franklin Institute,	5.00
Alice Lewis,	4.00
Sheldon & Co.,	6.00
Henry B. Dawson,	5.00
William T. Harris,	4.00
Littell & Gay,	8.00
Nelson & Phillips,	2.50
New England Historic Genealogical Society,	3.00
William L. Kingsley,	4.00
New York Genealogical and Biographical Society,	4.00
Roberts Bros.,	4.00
John H. Carmany & Co.,	7.00
W. S. West,	4.00
Benerman & Wilson,	8.00
Scribner & Co.,	6.00
Universalist Publishing House,	5.00
D. Van Nostrand,	35.45
E. Steiger,	8.10
A. S. Barnes & Co.,	5.00
F. Leypoldt,	6.00
Schoenhof & Moeller,	77.55
Scribner, Welford & Armstrong,	673.98
A. Williams & Co.,	13.00
Lippincott & Co.,	7.50
C. W. Bryan & Co.,	5.00
R. G. Reed,	4.00
Samuel K. Bates,	7.50
Scribner, Armstrong & Co.,	28.77
Bell Sargent,	5.00
S. Hutchinson,	238.02
J. W. Bouton,	65.95

A. L. Luyster,	27.50
J. L. Sisson,	56.00
E. P. Raymond,	3.00
United States Patent Office,	37.50
Robert Clarke & Co.,	6.00
Essex Institute,	3.00
D. Dudley,	2.00
I. S. Bushnell,	7.50
J. H. Jewett,	8.25
Academy of Natural Sciences,	5.00
Little, Brown & Co.,	360.75
H. J. Nowland,	6.00
Butler & Fleetwood,	40.00
S. W. Hall,	3.00
S. R. Crocker,	1.50
B. Westermann & Co.,	5.83
George W. Tryon, Jr.,	8.50
Ebenezer F. Nye,	10.00
Daniel Ricketson,	4.00
W. B. Clarke,	327.00
Boston Society of Natural History,	6.00
G. P. Putnam's Sons,	8.25
Harper & Bros.,	3.35
Munn & Co.,	2.70
John M. Leavitt,	2.00
John E. Potter & Co.,	4.00
	$2,622.77

GEORGE HOWLAND JUNIOR FUND.

1874.		
Jan. 3.	Unexpended balance of income,	$39.97
	Interest,	96.00
	Balance unexpended,	$135.97

CHARLES W. MORGAN FUND.

1874.		
Jan. 3.	Unexpended balance of income,	$33.47
	Interest,	60.00
	Balance unexpended,	$93.47

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY FUND.

1874.
Jan. 3. Balance unexpended, .43
Nov. 7. This amount was passed to credit of Sylvia Ann Howland fund, to close account.

The total of unexpended income of funds in the control of the Trustees, is now as follows:

Sylvia Ann Howland Free Public Library fund,	$9,793.07
George Howland Junior fund,	135.97
Charles W. Morgan fund,	93.47
	$10,022.51

D.

LEASE OF THE MUSEUM TO THE MARION NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

This agreement, made this twenty-sixth day of September in the year 1874, between the city of New Bedford, by George B. Richmond its Mayor, and the Marion Natural History Society, a corporation located in the town of Marion, by James C. Briggs its President, the said Richmond and Briggs being hereto duly authorized,

Witnesses that the said city does hereby lease to the said society a collection of specimens in natural history and of miscellaneous articles, and the cases in which they have been kept, as per catalogue hereto annexed; which collection and cases became the property of the city of New Bedford by bill of sale from the Young Men's Natural History Society of New Bedford, dated July 24, 1871. This lease is given on the following conditions:

1. The said Society of Marion shall keep the said collection in some suitable place in the town of Marion, reasonably accessible to the public, and shall properly care for the same and for the said cases, and shall release the said collection and cases to the city of New Bedford whenever demanded by the Trustees of the Free Public Library or by the City Council of the said city, in as good condition as they now are, reasonable use and unavoidable accidents and depreciation excepted.

2. If the said Trustees or City Council shall demand the release of the said collection and cases, and the same are delivered into the possession of the said Trustees or Council before the expiration of five years, a part of the expense of cataloguing, packing, and transporting the same from New Bedford to Marion (an account of which expense is hereto annexed,) shall be borne by the city of New Bedford, in the proportion that the unexpired time from the date of such demand and delivery to the twenty-sixth day of September in the year 1879 shall bear to the full term of five years from this date to the said twenty-sixth day of September, 1879.

3. The said city of New Bedford, by its duly authorized agents, shall at all reasonable times have full access to said collection and cases.

In token hereof, the said city of New Bedford and Marion Natural History Society have caused these presents to be executed in duplicate by the said George B. Richmond, Mayor, and James C. Briggs, President.

In behalf of the city of New Bedford.

GEO. B. RICHMOND, Mayor.

JAMES C. BRIGGS, President.

Witness—WARREN E. CHASE.

E.

THE YOUNG MEN'S NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF NEW BEDFORD.

BY JAMES C. BRIGGS.

The Young Men's Cabinet of Natural History, afterward the Young Men's Natural History Society, was organized September 25, 1863, by a few members of the New Bedford High School; and its object was declared to be the mutual benefit of the members and the advancement of the knowledge of natural history in the High School.

This object was to be promoted by meetings held for the purpose of discussions, readings, and other exercises. The meetings were first held in the basement of the High School building on Middle street.

A few specimens, two flat cases and an upright case were loaned the society by the School Committee; and a collection of Indian implements, which had belonged to a former Natural History Society, was procured from the City Library by the exertions of Mr. Abner J. Phipps.

Meetings were held weekly, and the activity of the members procured donations with nearly every meeting. These were handed to the different members to investigate and report on the following week. When there were no donations, subjects were given out to be read up and reported upon.

Sometimes a member brought in a friend as visitor, but not often. The society and the collection increased quite rapidly.

Perhaps it would have been as well if the collection had been more limited: undoubtedly it would have been a great advantage if after studying the specimens they could have been placed in other hands, as the custody of them was a constant burden and increasing expense, which finally destroyed the society.

About the first of July, 1865, it was found expedient to remove from the basement of the High School building, both on account of room and because many of the specimens were being spoiled by the dampness. A hall was secured in Chase's Block, corner of Purchase and Elm streets, and the transfer was made at an expense to the society of two and one half dollars.

The expenses of the society had hitherto been met by admission fees and semi-annual dues from the members, or, upon extra occasions, such as the purchase of expensive books, by aid from their friends; but the addition of one hundred and fifty dollars rent rendered some other means necessary. This was met by a fair or festival in which efficient aid was received from lady friends of the society, who were always welcome visitors at the meetings, but were never allowed to join the organization.

As results of a successful fair, came refitting the rooms, new and expensive cases, gas fixtures, and opening the rooms to the public one evening in each week; a practice which was continued till the dissolution of the society.

Twice only was the expedient of a lecture tried as a means of raising funds. The best of lecturers were secured, who drew crowded houses when their lectures were free, but pecuniary loss was the unvarying result.

On the 1st of March, 1866, the society was organized under the General Statutes of the State of Massachusetts, taking the name of the Young Men's Natural History Society, and declaring its purpose to be the study of natural history,

the collection of specimens of the same and of curiosities of any kind.

In September, 1866, Maj. Gen. B. F. Butler was invited to address the society, and two years later a favorable response was received, when the society decided that they didn't care to hear him.

During the winter of 1867–68, a number of free lectures were given at the rooms by members and others, and were well attended by the public.

About this time a similar society was started in Marion, which through the munificence of a lady resident here but a native of Marion, was almost at the outset put on a firm foundation by the gift of a museum building. No one had yet offered to put up a building here, though many expected it.

In June, 1870, it was found that the collection had so increased that it was advisable to look about for a larger hall. Cummings Hall was selected as the most desirable for many reasons; its size, location and ease of access being the principal.

In July the change was effected at an expense to the society of sixteen and eighty-four one-hundredths dollars, nearly all the labor being gratuitous, and on July 26th the first meeting was held in the new rooms.

In March, 1871, after giving up Pierian Hall which had been engaged for a festival, and depending on a lecture by which they lost fifty dollars, the society felt that they had done all their duty in trying to establish a museum in the city. A few young men just starting in life, more than half of them clerks on small pay, had for eight years supported a growing museum at an outlay of over $3000. No one of them, however, complains that the value to himself was not worth all it cost. A committee was now appointed to draw

up some terms upon which the museum could be transferred to the city.

All who had deposits in the museum were notified by advertisement to withdraw them, and in the latter part of July, 1871, the transfer was made.

The society still existed however, and had charge of the museum, but the aid had come too late. The attendance at the meetings fell rapidly off: some to their farms, some to their merchandise, but the greater part were married and therefore they *could not* come.

In July, 1872, additional interest was created by the accession of several new members from the High School, but this was only the last flash before the quenching of the flame.

September 25, 1873, was celebrated the decade of the society; June, 1874, the society dissolved.

The following is a list of those who have been members of the society:

Roswell E. Briggs,
Wm. R. Brightman,
Oliver F. Brown,
Thos. E. Borden, Jr.,
Erastus D. Swasey,
Walter A. Vincent,
Thos. W. Croacher,
Gardner T. Sanford,
Luther G. Hewins, Jr.,
Albert P. Ryder,
James Handley,
Henry R. Wood,
Horace A. Lawton,
Stafford I. Sweet,
Stephen F. Adams,
Orlando Corey,
Julian A. Sweet,
Wm. H. Bosworth,
Chas. R. Tobey,
Wm. B. Sherman,
E. C. Dubois,
Edward G. Jenney,
Edward G. Tallman,
James C. Briggs,
Eben C. Milliken,
James H. Tallman,
Wm. B. Bosworth,
Wm. J. Waters,
Fredk. A. Bradford,
James H. Lamb,
John T. Waters,
Chas. F. Matthews,
William Bliss,
Jos. S. Johnson,
Lewis E. Milliken,
Zenas M. Briggs,
Edward H. Field,
George S. Fox,
Thos. R. Hillman,
Stephen W. Hayes,
Caleb Maxfield, Jr.,
Chas. B. Humphrey,
James A. Young,
Eugene J. Hadley,
Richard J. Newton,
Israel C. Cornish,
Wm. R. Sherman.
Eugene V. McLeod,
Frank B. Simmons,
Arthur S. Anthony,
Geo. F. Winslow,
Chas. S. Kelley,
Geo. T. Hough,
A. A. Hazeltine,
Franklin Tobey, Jr.,
Lorenzo M. Davis,
Chas. H. Hoeg,
Wm. O. Devoll,
Edward G. Taber,
Wm. L. Watkins,
Edward S. Brown,
Olin S. Paine,
Franklin C. Tripp,
J. A. Taylor,
John H. Beetle.
Wm. G. Cranston,
Chas. F. Edwards,
Wm. A. Mackie,
George Mackie,
C. E. Ellis,
Frank A. Booth,
C. W. Knight,
Wm. G. Kirschbaum,
Arthur Baylies,
Chas. D. Stickney, Jr.,
Edward D. Mandell, Jr.,
Wm. A. Hersey,
E. E. Waite,
Thos. V. B. Nye,
C. H. Macomber.

F.

At the meeting of the Trustees held 2d January, 1875, the following, offered by Mr. Morgan, was adopted and ordered to be printed in appendix to Report:

Whereas, This is the last meeting of the Trustees of the Free Public Library at which we shall have the pleasure of meeting his Honor, Geo. B. Richmond, President of the Board: it is

Voted, That the thanks of the Board be presented to Mr. Richmond for his unvarying urbanity and fidelity, and that we extend to him our heartfelt wishes that prosperity and happiness may always attend him.

G.

A SCRAP OF HISTORY, RELATING TO THE ORIGIN OF THE LIBRARY.

The public has been already informed through the publications of the library (see appendix to 18th annual report, p. 31) that on 8th of July, 1851, at the next meeting of the City Council after the statute took effect allowing cities and towns to appropriate money for libraries, Warren Ladd, Esq., introduced in the Common Council a preliminary order looking toward the establishment of a Free Public Library, which order was adopted by the Common Council, but defeated in the Board of Aldermen.

The circumstances that led in 1852 to the establishment of the library, are perhaps not so well known, and the following facts, condensed for the most part from an article in the Evening Standard of June 5th, 1869, will be found of interest:

In 1849–50, Mr. J. Fillmore Kelley kept a private school in the second story of the building southwest corner of Purchase and Hillman streets. For a time it was his frequent custom to pass the evening in the school-room with a few friends, informally discussing various subjects of interest through a cloud of tobacco smoke. Their spirits were so congenial that a proposal of Mr. Kelley to form an organized debating society, was at once acceded to, and an organization was effected on the 4th of February, 1851, by the name of the Union Debating Association. The association flourished a little more than a year, and during that time the following names were added to its roll of membership:

J. Fillmore Kelley,
Solomon White, Jr.,
John A. Ruggles,
B. R. Hathaway,
George W. Paine,
W. E. Overton,
F. A. Mickell,
Meltiah J. Bourne,
Levi F. Moulton,
W. F. Durfee,
James Durfee, Jr.,
William Bosworth,
Cyrus M. Vaughan,
Robert A. Taber,
Nathan A. Vurgason,
Geo. C. Hatch, Jr.,
Thomas N. Tobey,
Lorenzo D. Davis,
E. H. Chisole,
Edwin Hall,
Frederick Wing,
Lysander Cushman,
James B Chace,
——— McEveline,
Fitch Weed.

In March, 1852, Mr. George M. Bunker spoke to Mr. Kelley of the movement in progress in Boston for the establishment of a public library, and suggested that the Debating Association might appropriately engage in a similar effort. The suggestion was acted upon, and at the regular meeting of the association on 30th March, Messrs. W. F. Durfee, Overton, Paine and Ruggles were appointed a committee to take the subject into consideration. The next regular meeting was on 6th April, and the committee reported that it was expedient for the society to take such measures to bring the subject beforé the City Government as would best tend to advance its interests and establishment. The report was accepted, and the committee was requested to draw up a series of resolutions as a basis of action. The following were prepared, presented and adopted the same evening:

Whereas, In the opinion of this association the establishment and maintenance of a free library in this city, would tend to promote and develop the moral, intellectual and social faculties of the youth, and specially the young men, thereby preventing a vast amount of misery and crime and their consequent results, and also to remove the stigma of immorality and licentiousness that now rests upon the city; believing furthermore that the establishment of such an institution would reflect lasting credit upon the city: be it therefore

Resolved, That this association cause petitions to be circulated praying our municipal authorities to establish such an institution. And further,

Resolved, That a committee of six be appointed to carry the above resolution into effect.

On this committee, Messrs. W. F. Durfee, Ruggles, Davis, Paine, Hatch and Overton were appointed.

The preamble and resolutions were printed in the daily papers under the head of "special notices," and the petitions were circulated by the committee, assisted by Mr. Kelley, who could not be formally appointed on the committee, having become an honorary member of the association.

In a few weeks, 448 signatures were obtained, and on 27th May the petition was presented to the City Council, and was by concurrent action on 7th June, referred to the joint standing committee on public instruction, consisting of Aldermen H. H. Crapo and Mark B. Palmer, and Councilmen Robert C. Pitman, James Munroe, and Henry P. Willis.

On the 14th of June, the committee presented the following report, which was accepted:

The "joint standing committee on public instruction," to whom was referred the petition of J. B. Congdon, Esq., and others, asking the City Council to make an appropriation for the establishment and maintenance of a free library, Report:

That they have duly considered the subject thus referred to their consideration, and recommend that the sum of fifteen hundred dollars for the present year be appropriated for the establishment and support of a public library, and that an ordinance be forthwith framed for the organization and government of such an institution.

The committee would beg leave to add that they have been somewhat influenced in making this recommendation, by a communication received from Mr. Congdon, on behalf of a committee of the proprietors of the New Bedford Social Library, proposing to place said library, containing about 5000 volumes, most of them it is said, being valuable standard works, and worth at a low valuation $3,500, at the disposal of the city, upon the payment of "a nominal sum just sufficient to cover the demands against the institution"—say about $300,*—and "provided the authorities should, by the passage of the order making the appropriation asked for, establish the principle that the maintenance of a free city library, for the continuous education of the people, will be the settled polity of the city."

"With such a foundation to build upon," says Mr. Congdon—"with the

* The sum eventually paid was $600, as appears on the next page.

appropriation now prayed for to give it a position for immediate and extended usefulness, the library would open to our inhabitants the means of innocent enjoyment and of valuable acquisition, and be a source of commendable pride to our citizens."

All of which is respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee.

HENRY H. CRAPO, Chairman.

The annual appropriation bill for the years 1852–3, passed 20th July, 1852, contained an item of $1,500 for the library. This appropriation for the library was moved as an amendment to the bill by Councilman Pitman, before the report of the committee on public instruction was presented. The ordinance for its government was passed to be ordained on 16th August; and the library was opened to the public on the 3d of March, 1853, in rooms on the second floor of "Perkins's Building," 139 Union street, in charge of Mr. Robert C. Ingraham, who has been continued as librarian from that time. He had been familiar with the Social Library for the last part of its existence. The library was removed from Union street on 9th May, 1857, and reopened in the building erected for it on 9th November in the same year.

The Union Debating Association ceased to exist before its petition was presented to the City Council, its last record being dated 25th May, 1852.

The bill of sale of the Social Library to the City of New Bedford is as follows:

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS,

That the New Bedford Social Library, a corporation duly established in New Bedford in the County of Bristol, in consideration of six hundred dollars to them paid by the City of New Bedford in said County, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby give, grant, sell, convey, transfer and assign unto the said City of New Bedford, for the purposes of the Public Library, all the books, pamphlets, periodicals and other property belonging to the said New Bedford Social Library, a cata-

logue of which books, pamphlets, periodicals and property is hereto annexed and made part of this instrument.

To have and to hold the same by the said City of New Bedford, upon the following terms, conditions, and limitations, viz.:

First. That the nonresident proprietors or shareholders in said New Bedford Social Library, shall be permitted to use the Public Library of the City of New Bedford, with the same privileges as the citizens of New Bedford.

Second. That if at any time after this transfer the City of New Bedford shall refuse or neglect to support and maintain the Public Library, all the books and other property hereby transferred to said city, and which may then be remaining in the possession of the said City of New Bedford, shall revert back to the said New Bedford Social Library, their successors and assigns, to be disposed of as they may deem proper.

In witness whereof, the said New Bedford Social Library, by Thomas B. White, Thomas A. Greene, John F. Emerson and Oliver Prescott, a committee duly authorized by a vote of said corporation for that purpose, have hereunto set the name and affixed the seal of the said corporation, this, the twenty-fifth day of September, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and fifty-two.

NEW BEDFORD SOCIAL LIBRARY,

{ L. S. }

By { TH. B. WHITE, THOS. A. GREENE, OLIVER PRESCOTT, JOHN F. EMERSON.

Witness: EDWARD FALES.

Our library is supposed to be older than any other of a like character. An act of the General Court authorizing the city of Boston to establish and maintain a public library, became a law 12th March, 1848, and was accepted by the city 3d April; but the first library ordinance did not pass the City Council till 12th October, 1852, and the Boston Public Library was opened 2d May, 1854, its reading room having been opened in March of that year.

H.

"BEDFORD SOCIAL LIBRARY."

The reader of our Annual Reports has been so long accustomed to find in each one some relic of the past which Mr. Congdon has gathered for preservation with loving hand, that we are sure we shall afford pleasure in publishing from a manuscript heretofore donated by him, a report of the old Social Library, made in 1806:

The directors of the Bedford Social Library, agreeable to the second article of the regulations, Report:

That they have examined the accounts of the Treasurer for the year past, and find there has been received

Of E. Thornton,		$1.82
For assessments on 93 shares,		46.50
For fines,		11.03
For one share sold,		2.50
		$61.85
That there has been expended for books,	$29.72	
For printing catalogue and regulations,	7.50	
For binding books,	9.08	
For librarian's fee,	12.00	
For a Justice's warrant,	1.00	
Balance in the treasury,	2.55	
		$61.85
They find there is assessments on 25 shares unpaid, which is	$12.50	
Fines,	3.49	
Balance in the treasury,	2.55	
Assessments on 118 shares for the year 1806, is	59.00	
	$77.54	

Which sum the directors recommend should be appropriated for the purchase of the following books, and expenses of the library, viz.:

The Domestic Encyclopedia.
The Life of Washington.
The Life of Jones.

Betham's Biographical Dictionary.
Marriot's Poems.
Pleasures of Hope.
Carr's Northern Summer.
Bloomfield's Poems.
Stranger in France.
Shenstone's Poems, &c.
The British Classicks.

Which is submitted to the meeting.

ELISHA THORNTON, Jr.
CALEB RUSSELL, Jr.
TIMOTHY DELANO.

BEDFORD SOCIAL LIBRARY,

To ABRAHAM SHEARMAN, Jr., Dr.

1806.			
11 mo. 29.	For	1 life Sir Wm. Jones,	$2.75
		1 Domestic Encyclopedia,	15.00
		1 Marriot's Poems—best binding,	.87½
		1 Pleasures of Hope,	.75
		1 Carr's Northern Summer,	1.25
		1 Female Biography,	2.25
			$22.87½
		Discount 5 pr. cent.,	1.14½
			$21.73

Received payment of Elisha Thornton, Jr.

ABRAHAM SHEARMAN, Jr.